Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 16, 2021

**Welcome & Gathering**

**Call to Worship** (adapted from Psalm 1)

One: Our delight is in the law of the Lord,

**All: And on God’s law we meditate day and night.**

One: The faithful are like trees planted by streams of water,

**All: Which yield their fruit in its season,**

One: And their leaves do not wither.

**All: Oh God, you make the faithful blossom and grow! Let us worship God together!**

**Hymn** Glory to God #14 For the Beauty of the Earth

**Prayer of Confession**

 Holy God, we confess that we often stray from your call for our lives. We have acted out of self interest at the expense of our neighbor. We have sought purpose in material things, instead of the eternal. We have created divisions, instead of seeking unity and understanding. We have not loved who you love. Turn us around, O God. Forgive us for our shortsightedness. Help us to walk in compassion and faithfulness for the good of your world. Amen.

**Assurance of Forgiveness**

Siblings in Christ, hear this Good News:

Again, again, and again, God welcomes us in.

Why? Because God loves us beyond imagining.

Friends, receive this grace, and live life anew.

In Christ, we are forgiven. Alleluia. Amen.

**Prayer for Illumination**

O God, open these words to us today, that we might hear, see, and understand your Word with freshness and willing hearts. May the scripture read today move us to action in our daily lives. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

**Scripture**

 New Testament Reading Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

 Gospel Reading John 17:6-19

**Sermon** Rev. Laura Neely

**Hymn** Glory to God #634 To God Be the Glory

**Affirmation of Faith - The Apostles’ Creed**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**Prayers of the People and The Lord’s Prayer** (adapted from a prayer from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion*)

Risen Lord, you gather us from the dust and breathe new life into us. In the light of the resurrection we are emboldened to start again like the freshness of the spring.

Lord, make us strong, because the world is a broken place. Yet, break our hearts that we might show love and mercy. Attune us to the needs of our neighbors.

In every age you call forth ordinary people to lead your people in the way of righteousness and of compassion. We ask for blessing on their service. Help our leaders in the church, in our city, in our nation and in our world to fulfill their calling; give them courage to speak the truth in love, and shield them from temptation to misuse their authority.

Merciful God, we watch nations rebel against one another. We hear of violence, war and destruction. God all, be present in conflict. We pray with hope that we might be instruments for a peaceable and just world.

You hear the cry of the sick and the suffering. Through your earthly life we know that you are a God who suffers with us. In our distress, we know that you walk with us. Bring us healing of mind, body, or soul. In particular hear our prayers for:

*(Share names of those for which the congregation prays)*

God of a varied people, you call us together in unity and love. A deep love that we know in the innermost depths of our being, because of you. Give us courage to live out your calling for our lives. To step out if faith like Ruth, like Moses, like Mary, like Jeremiah, like Esther. Assure us that we are not too young, too old, too weak, too scared, too unequipped. Empower us to be brave, loving, and merciful, assured that we can start anew with each day.

O God, in Jesus Christ you have shown your love for the world. Now, hear us as we pray the prayer your son taught us, saying…

**Prayer of Dedication**

Holy God, when we pray, you are already working through us. We give thanks that you are active in our lives and the lives of others. Accept these humble gifts in thankfulness for how you walk with us. May they be used to your glory. Amen.

**Hymn** Glory to God #754 Help us Accept Each Other

**Blessing and Charge**

Friends, go out into the world, with the hope and joy of Jesus who loves us! Go in peace.